United Nations S/PV.6687

# Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

*Provisional*

**6687**th meeting

Wednesday, 14 December 2011, 3 p.m.

New York

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| *President*: | Mr. Churkin | (Russian Federation) |
| *Members*: | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Mr. Vukašinović |
| | Brazil | Mr. Fernandes |
| | China | Mr. Yang Tao |
| | Colombia | Mr. Alzate |
| | France | Mrs. Le Fraper du Hellen |
| | Gabon | Mr. Moungara Moussotsi |
| | Germany | Mr. Eick |
| | India | Mr. Kumar |
| | Lebanon | Mr. Assaf |
| | Nigeria | Mrs. Ogwu |
| | Portugal | Mr. Cabral |
| | South Africa | Mr. Mashabane |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Ms. Hendrie |
| | United States of America | Mr. DeLaurentis |

## Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in that country (S/2011/739)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The situation in the Central African Republic**

**Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in that country (S/2011/739)**

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Central African Republic to participate in this meeting.

I request the Protocol Officer to escort His Excellency Mr. Faustin Archange Touadera, Prime Minister and Head of Government of the Central African Republic, to a seat at the Council table.

*Mr. Faustin Archange Touadera, Prime Minister and Head of Government of the Central African Republic, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.*

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Prime Minister Touadera.

I wish to acknowledge the presence in the Council Chamber of His Excellency Mr. Antoine Gambi, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Francophonie of the Central African Republic.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Margaret Vogt, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Jan Grauls, Chairman of the country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission on the Central African Republic and Permanent Representative of Belgium, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/739, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in that country.

I give the floor to Ms. Vogt.

**Ms. Vogt**: It is an honour for me to present the sixth report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/739) on the work of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA). The report before the Council builds on the Secretary-General's previous report (S/2011/311) of 16 May 2011, and provides an update on political, security, socio-economic, humanitarian and human rights developments in the Central African Republic. It also describes the salient activities of BINUCA in support of the Government's peace consolidation efforts, in accordance with the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council.

In the first half of the year, BINUCA focused on elections, as well as on the aftermath of a contested electoral process that began on 23 January with the presidential and legislative elections. In my last briefing to the Council (see S/PV.6575), I highlighted four priority areas on which BINUCA will accord particular focus in the following months. These include working with the Government and the political class to manage the tension and dissension that followed the January elections; seeking ways of creating a rapprochement between the Government and the opposition; and getting all parties around the table to discuss the future political dispensation and national reconciliation.

I also highlighted the importance of the commencement of the disarmament and demobilization process after several months of blockage, starting in the north-east, as well as the signature of ceasefire agreements between the Government and the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP), as well as between the Chadian Government and the Front populaire pour le redressement (FPR), led by the Chadian dissident Baba Laddé. At that time, I signaled that the commencement of the disarmament process and the conclusion of these peace agreements constituted major steps towards the stabilization of the security environment in the Central African Republic.

The difficult social, humanitarian and human rights context in which the people of the Central African Republic exist was also highlighted, and I undertook to pay particular attention to issues relating to the protection of civilians, especially women and children.

The last briefing also highlighted the complex regional security environment in which the Central African Republic is situated and the potential destabilizing impact on the Central African Republic of development in the region, and how a degeneration of security in the Central African Republic would equally impact on the region. I put a particular accent on the activities of foreign elements, such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the FPR, operating in that country.

The report before the Council provides an analysis of developments on these various fronts and the efforts undertaken by BINUCA and the rest of the United Nations family to address these challenges.

On the political front, I am pleased to report that, in spite of the divisions within the political, the situation today has greatly improved. Following extensive consultations that I had with the Government, the political parties, representatives of civil society and other partners, we identified the importance of discussion of the reform of the electoral code and the establishment of a permanent electoral body as possible entry points to bring all stakeholders around the table and to gradually help build confidence that could lead to broader discussion of other difficult issues.

The commencement of the first workshop of the consultation committee on the revision of the electoral code, held in Bangui from 28 to 30 November — which brought together the Government, the political parties, civil society, religious leaders, and representatives of the international community as observers — signified a major political breakthrough that could lead to the creation of a framework for continuing discussion between the Government and the political class. The Government undertook to adopt a consensual approach to electoral reforms.

Following a study tour of a number of countries, undertaken by the Minister for Territorial Administration and Decentralization to learn from their experiences in managing electoral processes, the Ministry presented a proposal of a framework of a permanent body to manage elections and referendums. The proposal calls for the establishment of an independent body — the national agency for elections — that would supervise and control electoral activities to be carried out by the Ministry. A consultative committee composed of political and civil society actors would monitor the electoral process as an observer. The Constitutional Court would retain its adjudication role in all electoral disputes. The High Council for Communication would continue to monitor candidates' access to national and private media.

During the discussion that took place at the first consultation, representatives of the political parties and of civil society expressed a preference for the establishment of an authority for elections that would be independent of the Ministry and would administer the entire electoral process.

The Government's agreement to engage in this consultation was an unexpected and major breakthrough. The Government and opposition parties have re-established contacts that had been halted since late 2010. A second round of discussion is scheduled for January 2012 to discuss, among other issues, the opposition's counter-proposal to the Government's plan on the electoral management body. It is crucial to the political stability of the Central African Republic that this discussion continue and that the parties arrive at consensus on these matters.

The report suggests that despite its near unicameral nature, the legislature has exercised an impressive independence and has taken the Government to task on major issues.

In my last briefing, I informed the Council of the determination of President Bozizé and leaders of the politico-military groups to pursue the nationwide disarmament process that they began last June. As of today, 4,800 ex-combatants of the Armée populaire pour la restauration de la démocratie (APRD) have been disarmed and demobilized. Nevertheless, the majority of ex-combatants are in their villages awaiting plans for their reintegration. It is evident that the disarmament in the north-east has had a positive impact on the overall security environment in that part of the country. The movement of people and goods has been facilitated and, based on an evaluation mission to the region from 22 to 30 November, security remains stable, if tense, as the ex-combatants are now in high expectation of the reinsertion and reintegration

exercise. Unfortunately, provision has not been made to fund the reintegration strategy, and adequate funding is inadequate to complete disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in the rest of the country.

We are now at a highly precarious juncture in the Central African Republic. Failure to find the resources to conclude disarmament in the north and north-east, where all the politico-military parties are anxiously awaiting the disarmament of their forces, may lead to a major resurgence of violence and further undermine security in a region where, even in normal circumstances, movement is highly impacted by insecurity. At the same time, the temporary gain made in securing the north-west could be lost.

The Government requires about $3 million to complete the disarmament process through the country, and about $19 million for the reintegration exercise. The completion of the DDR process is strongly linked to an effective security sector reform (SSR) if the Government is to regain control of its territory. Strongly encouraged by BINUCA to define a national strategy, and by our partners — especially the indomitable advocate Ambassador Grauls — we have been pressing the Government to work on the SSR strategy. Just before I left, we received a request from the Ministry of Defence for support to undertake that exercise. The success of the DDR and SSR processes will depend heavily on the ability of the international community to provide necessary resources for their timely completion.

As a next step to the signing of the ceasefire agreement between the CPJP and the UFDR, following the outbreak of conflict in the north-east a peace and reconciliation caravan visited the conflict-affected cities in the north-east to promote reconciliation and peaceful coexistence among local communities. During that important gathering, both CPJP and UFDR leaders, as well as local communities, pleaded for a speedy DDR process to enable them to live in peace.

We need to move beyond the peace and reconciliation caravan to ensure that the results that have been achieved thus far are not reversed by the outbreak of violence in the future. The establishment of processes through which local communities would be involved in conflict prevention and resolution in the affected areas is critical. The Government has expressed its willingness to work in that direction, and there, again, additional resources will be required.

The signing of action plans for the release and reintegration of children associated with the APRD and the CPJP, in October and November, constitutes another major step forward. We were delighted that the signing of the latest action plan was witnessed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, who was visiting the Central African Republic at the time.

Two foreign armed groups continue to pose a serious threat to the peace process and to overall security in the Central African Republic. Those are the Front populaire pour le redressement (FPR), led by the self-proclaimed Chadian "General" Baba Laddé, and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony. Baba Laddé has become a nuisance and a threat to the Central African Republic and the region.

Rather than leaving the country as expected in June, he is recruiting and re-arming. During my last visit to Bambari and Kaga Bandoro, people complained about his multiple exactions on the population. His elements have been accused of rape and forced collection of cattle from herders as protection fees, including from the Fulani population, whom he claims to protect. Just a week ago, his elements carried out attacks just 60 kilometres outside of Bangui and forced a restriction of international movement along many axes.

It is important that the Council send an unequivocal message condemning the FPR's illegal activities and that it urge Baba Laddé to stop harassing the population, lay down his arms and return to Chad. He should be held accountable for the violations perpetrated against the civilian population in those regions. The Council may also wish to encourage Chad and the Central African Republic to collaborate with other affected countries in the region to find a peaceful solution to the Baba Laddé issue.

Concerning the LRA, BINUCA has initiated steps to support national and international efforts aimed at curbing the impact of the LRA on the security of the Central African Republic and to work closely with the African Union. In that regard, a local coordination cell chaired by BINUCA has been established — with the participation of the United States of America, France, the African Union, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Government of the Central African Republic — to share information on the ground. The deployment of United States military

advisers in the subregion to strengthen the capacity of affected countries has also been deeply welcomed in the Central African Republic.

Since my last briefing to the Council, simmering tensions and a climate of growing anger have characterized the social environment in the Central African Republic from August to October, threatening social cohesion. However, the Government has since taken bold measures to negotiate with labour unions and has so far ensured the regular payment of salaries.

The Government, with contributions from the National Assembly, community leaders across the country, including civil society, and international partners, has finalized its second poverty reduction strategy paper. It will now be important for the Central African Republic to follow up with its bilateral and multilateral partners on the required assistance and support.

The cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the Central African Republic deserves to be highlighted. The EU has now started to implement its €50 million development hubs programme, whose goal is to alleviate poverty, restore social and economic stability and enhance peace. Although not especially aimed at ex-combatants, they may qualify, along with community members, for the high-intensity labour works, as part of their reintegration process. We intend to ensure that we try to couple that initiative by the European Union with the reintegration process.

The humanitarian situation remains highly precarious and is seriously impacted by the security situation on the ground, which has rendered access difficult. Reports have it that the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Central African Republic is on the increase, especially in Bangui and in conflict-affected areas. Women are more affected than men, and boys more than girls. A report just published by Médecins Sans Frontières entitled "A Silent Crisis" concludes that the Central African Republic faces a chronic medical emergency, with mortality rates above the level of medical emergencies in other countries and with life expectancy that stands at 48 years. At the same time, the consolidated appeals process remains grossly underfunded, with the latest figure being 45 per cent. Apart from the issue of security, the problem on the humanitarian front, as in many other areas, is both a structural and developmental one.

The report before the Council points to continuing human rights challenges in the Central African Republic, including irregular or arbitrary detention by armed forces and non-State actors, witchcraft accusations, gender-based violence, et cetera. BINUCA has focused its activities on monitoring, technical cooperation and advisory services in the administration of justice, including the penitentiary and child protection activities. I intend to undertake a review of those activities in the next few months to see how best we can improve our delivery and effectiveness.

In the area of child protection, the country task force on monitoring and reporting on grave violations committed against children affected by the armed conflict in the Central African Republic was established on 27 July, in accordance with resolution 1612 (2005). Since its establishment, the task force has played a major advocacy role with the Government and armed groups to end and prevent grave violations committed against children.

In conclusion, I am pleased to report that the dynamic of peace initiated between the Government and politico-military groups has become a reality and offers a real chance for peace in the country. However, several obstacles risk blocking that process, and could ultimately undermine those efforts. The Government is listening and responding to advice from national stakeholders and the international community. However, the lack of funding to complete the DDR process and to initiate the second phase of SSR could put the Central African Republic on the brink of disaster. We need to act quickly to prevent a situation that may lead the country to disintegrate into another cycle of generalized conflict; that would have serious repercussions throughout the subregion. Failure to consolidate security in the Central African Republic would increase its attractiveness as a safe haven for regional brigands and rebel groups operating in the region. That factor explains the Secretary-General's urgent appeal to the international community to mobilize the appropriate funds to complete the DDR process, without which there will be no peace in the country. The total budget to complete disarmament and demobilization operations is $2,617,475. The total budget required for reinsertion and reintegration is $19,363,328. The success of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process will depend

on the will of the international community to support it.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ms. Vogt for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Grauls.

**Mr. Grauls** (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for permitting me to address the Security Council once again in my capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) country-specific configuration for the Central African Republic. I fully endorse the statement made by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Vogt, and I welcome here the presence of the Prime Minister of the Central African Republic, His Excellency Mr. Touadera. I believe that his presence here attests to the importance that his Government attaches to cooperation with the United Nations and with the international community as a whole. I should like to take this opportunity to convey to both of them my appreciation for their vision and their commitment and for the spirit of partnership in which they carry out their work with the Peacebuilding Commission.

I should like, through this briefing, to outline the situation in terms of peacebuilding and the resulting prospects for the future, on the basis in particular of a visit to the field that I undertook in October, when I headed a delegation from the country-specific configuration for the Central African Republic.

In that context, I should like to touch on three issues that involve both opportunities and risks: the security situation and its subregional dimension; the political climate; and the emerging new strategic vision of the Government.

First, with respect to the security situation, as Ms. Vogt pointed out, the Government has made considerable progress in terms of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of armed groups in the north-west part of the country, and brought the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP) to the negotiating table so as to enable it to become a party to the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Full attention is now being devoted to the reintegration of ex-combatants. However, financing such reintegration remains a major and pressing challenge. It was the promise of support for reintegration that enabled the Government to disarm and demobilize rebel combatants in the north-west of the country and to sign a ceasefire agreement with the CPJP, and it is the implementation of that pledge that will enable the reintegration process to be successful.

It is now urgent to secure the funding necessary to complete the DDR process and avert a resumption of hostilities. The Peacebuilding Fund and the World Bank, inter alia, are currently considering ways of contributing to this financing. However, this appeal is addressed also to other potential donors.

Security in the Central African Republic is closely linked to that in the subregion, and vice versa. The current subregional context could undo the fragile progress that has been achieved. The presence of foreign armed groups, in particular the Lord's Resistance Army, led by Joseph Kony, and the Front populaire pour le redressement, led by Baba Laddé, continue to destabilize Central Africa considerably. In addition, new mercenaries from Libya are often joining foreign armed groups. Those militias not only pose an immediate threat to the security of the people but also hinder the completion of the DDR process. Furthermore, those groups represent a threat to peace and security throughout the region.

The summits convened by subregional organizations provide the heads of State of neighbouring countries with an important opportunity to address the problem of subregional insecurity and its impact on Central Africa. The maintenance of the subregional force — the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic — beyond its current mandate would appear to be one of the appropriate measures.

My second point concerns the political climate and good governance. As was recalled by Ms. Vogt, the holding of the 2011 elections led to a major political reshuffling that resulted in the principal opposition parties leaving the National Assembly and gave the presidential party a broad parliamentary majority. In late November, the Government's holding of an inclusive workshop on electoral reform made clear its awareness of the importance of policies that are based on seeking a broad-based consensus.

Beyond electoral reform, the Peacebuilding Commission encourages the Government to extend this inclusive approach to all of the primary areas of public policy. The opposition should also be constructive in terms of its approach to dialogue with the Government,

despite its having boycotted the elections, which proved to be counterproductive.

Good governance and the fight against corruption are important priorities that the Government has highlighted in its general policy statement to the National Assembly. In the area of good governance, there needs to be an improvement in public finance management in order to restore relations with the International Monetary Fund.

The PBC encourages the initiative of the Prime Minister to hold a national workshop on fighting corruption in order to raise the awareness of all components of the nation with respect to this major problem. The National Assembly has major oversight responsibilities in this area.

The final point I would like to raise concerns the transition from the previous national poverty reduction strategy to the new one. Peacebuilding is one of the key pillars of this new strategy, which will involve efforts on the part of the Government as well as of its international partners in the years ahead. It is important that this strategy also win a broad national consensus.

As Chair of the country-specific configuration on the Central African Republic, I would like to reiterate here to the Government of that country that we are ready and willing to continue to support it in the period ahead in terms of mobilizing funds for the areas of the strategy that would contribute to peacebuilding. In that context, the Government will need to identify its priorities and present realistic numbers.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Grauls for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Touadera.

**Mr. Touadera** (*Central African Republic*) (spoke in French): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of December. I wish also to congratulate the Secretary-General on his reappointment to the helm of the Organization. Allow me to assure him of the support of the Central African Republic during his second term in his noble mission in the service of peace and security in our world, which is today beset by so many challenges. I wish also to congratulate Ms. Margaret Vogt for her work at the helm of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, as well as for the good relations between her Office and the Government of the Central African Republic.

It would be remiss for us not to extend such words of gratitude to the Chairman of the country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission on the Central African Republic, Ambassador Jan Grauls, whose commitment to the Central African cause we wish to recognize.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/739) that has just been presented generally sets out, with clarity, precision and concise analysis, a mostly fair picture of the Central African Republic since last July's update. We have paid careful attention to the report. The Government of the Central African Republic, which I have the honour of leading under the authority of the President of the Republic, has already noted the observations contained in the report. It is committed, in line with its capacities, means and limitations, to continue the reforms that underpin the recovery of our country, which aspires to peace, stability and development but remains very fragile. Allow me, however, to say that we face numerous challenges that could severely jeopardize the opportunity for a lasting peace in my country and the entire subregion.

Since 15 March, the beginning of the mandate of the second five-year term of the President of the Republic, while we recognize that much remains to be done, at the same time we can point to significant developments on the political level,. An inclusive Government, whose members are of different and varied affiliations, with quite a significant number of women, is doing its utmost to address the pressing issues of the Central African people. Parliament operates freely and plays its role in the service of the nation. On the political level, it is also worth recalling that a space for dialogue has been established between the Government and the various national political families. The same applies to certain bilateral and multilateral partners.

The recent consultation with the political parties of the democratic opposition aimed at establishing a standing body responsible for organizing future elections, the revision of the electoral code, and continuing the dialogue with the European Union under article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement on issues of mutual interest are, in our view, the paths to follow to ensure a sustained dialogue as the basis for mutual understanding, so that, together, we can overcome the

obstacles impeding the recovery of the Central African Republic.

On the security front, on 12 June the Government signed a ceasefire and peace agreement with the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP) armed group, which calls for that group to accede to the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2008. In June, the President of the Republic launched disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) operations that, in their first phase, enabled the demobilization of more than 4,000 former combatants in the north-west of the country, comprising largely former rebels of the Armée populaire pour la restauration de la démocratie (APRD).

DDR operations are ongoing in the centre-north and the north-east of the country, where the strongholds of the CPJP and Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement (UFDR) armed groups were situated. The second disarmament, demobilization and reintegration phase, like reintegration, is hampered by a lack of funding, which could jeopardize all efforts to date.

With regard to security sector reform, while short-term actions have been successfully launched by the Central African Government, we must nevertheless say that medium- and long-term actions requiring the assistance of our partners will be decisive; they merit the international community's special attention so as to expedite the process. The Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX), which is helping to shape peace and security in the Central African Republic, should gradually withdraw in stages by 2013. It will be replaced by the Central African Armed Forces.

The situation of greatest concern involves the foreign armed groups and road bandits, the Zaraguinas or roadblockers, who continue to operate in the north, carrying out attacks, kidnappings and the extortion of goods and money and causing the displacement of people, who have abandoned their villages, homes and fields with humanitarian consequences that can be imagined. The most appalling cases to date have been as a result of the incursions of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony, and the presence on our territory of the Chadian rebel Baba Laddé. They pose a significant challenge for the Central African Republic at a time when internal armed groups are hampering the implementation of the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

With regard to the Lord's Resistance Army, the Government will continue to fight that terrorist movement on its own and with the assistance of the subregion, the international community and those countries that have understood that that barbarous situations cannot remain the concern of just the few States that are victim to the crimes of those bandits and criminals.

This is an opportunity to welcome the initiatives of the Economic Community of Central African States, the African Union, the United Nations and the United States of America, who have been present and committed alongside us on the ground. Our gratitude also goes to the organizers of the thirty-third ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, held in Bangui from 5 to 9 December. That meeting not only commended the joint actions of the States of the subregion aimed at rooting out the LRA rebellion, but also demanded the departure of the Chadian armed group of Mr. Baba Laddé, who has installed himself in the centre of the country and seeks now to extend his influence to other parts of the national territory. He must leave the Central African Republic without conditions, and all legal means will be used to facilitate his departure from the Central African territory, starting with dialogue.

Concerning governance and the rule of law, the Government will continue its efforts in its unwavering struggle against corruption. The same goes for improving the business climate by providing some legal certainty for investment through laws and good practices drawn up and implemented to promote that end. Respect for human rights is an integral part of a democratic State. The State will ensure that respect and will spare no effort in ensuring access to justice for those who seek it.

Finally, in this international context of crisis, where austerity seems to be the order of the day, the State will do its utmost to maintain and, I would say, engage in dialogue with our traditional financial partners, without whom the Central African Republic, a post-conflict and fragile State, will not be able to curb the endemic poverty affecting its population.

To conclude my statement, my presence at the head of a significant delegation from my country in

New York, is testimony to the unequivocal will of the Central African Government and people to pursue by every possible means the paths of peace and stability, prerequisites of any sustainable development. For that reason, all goodwill, old or new, that can help us along that path is welcome in order to reach that shared goal.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

*The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.*